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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/518,441	04/07/2005	Wilfried Weitzer	4121-175	8411

7590 04/10/2007
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Intellectual Property Technology Law
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Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

EXAMINER

A, PHI DIEU TRAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3637

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	04/10/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/518,441

Applicant(s)

WEITZER, WILFRIED

Examiner

Phi D. A

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 December 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/24/05.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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1. PRODUCT BY PROCESS CLAIM:

“ The subject matter present is regarded as a product by process claim in which a product is introduced by the method in which it is made. It is the general practice of this office to examine the final product described regardless of the method provided by the applicant.”

The above office policy applies to the limitation of by an audible and noticeable click of claim 7.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-10 are indefinite as the alternative claim language of “and/or” confuse the scope of the claims.

Claim 1 line 10 “groove joint the tongue” is improper. Should it be “ groove joint, the tongue”?

Claim 9 line 3 “ or the like” is indefinite as it confuses the scope of the claim.

Claim 11 line 1 “ A interlocking” is improper English.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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2. Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ostrovsky (GB2117813).

Ostrovsky (figures 1-2) shows a panel element having a utilization side (11 top, figure 2), a counter draw (11, bottom figure 2) opposite the utilization side, a first longitudinal side having a tongue (parts 13, 27, 28 and its associated recesses, figure 1), a second longitudinal side which is located opposite the first longitudinal side and has a groove (the part denoted by 12, 23, figure 1) with a contour opposite to that of the tongue wherein the tongue having a first projection (27) extending beyond the utilization side in a first direction parallel to the utilization side and normal to the longitudinal direction of the tongue, in the region of the counter draw, the tongue having a second projection (28) extending in the first direction, a first undercut (the space where 31 is located) being formed between the first projection and the second projection, the groove having a third projection (22) extending beyond the counter draw in the first direction; and for creating a tongue and groove joint, the tongue being attached in an inclined fashion to the groove of another similar panel element and substantially on account of a rotary motion, the tongue and groove joint being established by locking the tongue in the groove of the other similar panel element, wherein the second projection of the tongue can be locked with the third projection of the groove of the other similar panel element and a semi-plastic deformation of the second projection (28) of the tongue and/or the third projection (22) of the groove of the other similar panel occurs during locking, the first undercut has a constriction in its opening region., the tongue has at least one extension and/or one second undercut in the second direction normal to the utilization side, the first projection (27) comprises the extension and/or the second undercut (the area below the projection 27), the first undercut and the second undercut are merged, when

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tongue is connected with the groove of another similar panel element, the tongue and groove have at least five contact points (there are indefinite contact points along the contact areas of the structure), the second projection (28) of the tongue can be locked with the third projection (22) of the groove of the other similar panel element by an audible and noticeable click (inherently able to function as claimed, when tongue is connected with the groove of another similar panel element the semi-plastic deformation is at least partially reconverted, the longitudinal sides and/or the face sides are at least partially treated, in particular sprayed, coated (coated by part 10) with a hydrophobic agent (metallic layer is hydrophobic), glue channels (64v-6-2-) form when the tongue is connected with the groove of another similar panel element.

The reference also shows an interlocking floor system as set forth in claim 11.

Conclusion

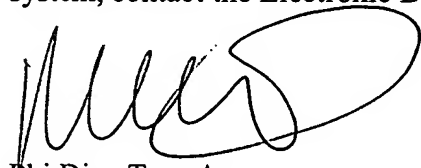
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The prior art shows different interlocking panels forming floors.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phi D A whose telephone number is 571-272-6864. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on 571-272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phi Dieu Tran A', with a large, loopy flourish at the end.

Phi Dieu Tran A

3/28/07